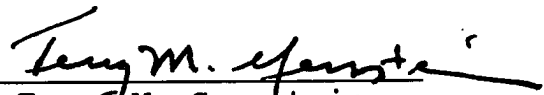


In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, review and allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Terry M. Gernstein

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May 8, 2001



MARKED UP COPIES OF CLAIMS

4 (Amended). The [tool] combination defined in Claim 3 wherein each fastener of the tool includes a tissue-penetrating portion and anchoring means on said tissue-penetrating portion for anchoring said tissue-penetrating portion after the tissue-penetrating portion has passed through the patient's tissue.

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16 (Amended). In combination:

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A) a multipart prosthesis which includes

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(1) a flexible sewing cuff,

(2) a prosthesis valve separate and spaceable from said flexible sewing cuff, and

(3) anchor elements for securely attaching said prosthesis valve to said flexible sewing cuff after said flexible sewing cuff has been attached to a patient; and

B) a tool for attaching said flexible sewing cuff to the patient and which includes

(1) a housing,

(2) at least one fastener stored in said housing in a tissue-penetrating shape and having an elastic limit, and

(3) a fastener handling means on said tool for forcing said fastener into the patient from one side of said flexible sewing cuff and the patient's tissue to attach said flexible sewing cuff to the patient and deforming said fastener beyond its elastic limit into a cuff-retaining shape.

17 (Amended). In combination:

C

A) a multipart prosthesis which includes

(1) a flexible sewing cuff,

(2) a prosthesis valve separate and spaceable from said flexible sewing cuff, and

[(3) said prosthesis valve beingsecuely attached to said flexible sewing cuff after said flexible sewing cuff has been attached to a patient; and

B) a tool for attaching said flexible sewing cuff to the patient and which includes

(1) a housing;

(2) at least one fastener stored in said housing, said fastener being self-tapping to penetrate the patient's tissue when rotated,]

(3) anchor elements for securely attaching said prosthesis valve to said flexible sewing cuff after said flexible sewing cuff has been attached to a patient; and

B) a tool for attaching said flexible sewing cuff to the patient and which includes

(1) a housing,

(2) at least one fastener stored in said housing, said fastener being self-tapping to penetrate the patient's tissue when rotated,

(3) a fastener handling means on said tool for imparting rotation to said fastener and forcing said fastener into the patient's tissue from one side of the patient's tissue to attach said flexible sewing cuff to the patient.

18 (Amended). In combination:

A) a multipart prosthesis which includes

(1) a flexible sewing cuff,

(2) a prosthesis valve separate and spaceable from said flexible sewing cuff, and

(3) anchor elements for securely attaching said prosthesis valve to said flexible sewing cuff after said flexible sewing cuff has been attached to a patient; and

B) a tool for attaching said flexible sewing cuff to the patient and which includes

(1) a housing,

(2) at least one fastener stored in said housing, and

(3) a fastener handling means on said tool for forcing said fastener into the patient from one side of the patient's tissue and attaching said flexible sewing cuff to the patient.

19 (Amended). In combination:


A) a multipart prosthesis which includes

(1) a flexible sewing cuff,

(2) a prosthesis valve separate and spaceable from said flexible sewing cuff, and

(3) anchor elements for securely attaching said prosthesis valve to said flexible sewing cuff after said flexible sewing cuff has been attached to a patient;

B) a fastener for attaching said sewing cuff to the patient from one side of said sewing cuff, said fastener having an elastic limit; and



C) means for forcing said fastener through said sewing cuff and attaching said sewing cuff to the patient without exceeding the elastic limit of said fastener whereby said fastener is non-formed when said sewing cuff is attached to the patient by said fastener.

20 (Amended). In combination:

A) a multipart heart valve prosthesis which includes

(1) a flexible sewing cuff,

(2) a prosthesis heart valve separate and spaceable from said flexible sewing cuff, and

(3) anchor elements for securely attaching said prosthesis valve to said flexible sewing cuff after said flexible sewing cuff has been attached to a patient;

B) a fastener for attaching said sewing cuff to the patient from one side of said sewing cuff, said fastener having an elastic limit and an initial shape; and

C) means for forcing said fastener through said sewing cuff and attaching said sewing cuff to the patient without exceeding the elastic limit of said fastener.